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NRC FOR OIP - DOANE; SCHWARTZMAN
DOE FOR S-1, NA-20-DAGASTINO;
NA-243-GOOREVICH, OEHLBERT;
NA-241 O'CONNOR; NA-21- CUMMINS;
NSC FOR HOLGATE, SCHEINMAN

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SUBJECT: IAEA/General Conference - NRC Bilateral Meetings

11. (U) SUMMARY: From September 14-17, 2009, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko participated in the IAEA General Conference in Vienna, Austria. During the week, he conducted 20 bilateral meetings with foreign regulatory counterparts and members of the IAEA Secretariat. He also served as Chairman of the Senior Regulators Meeting on September 17. In addition, Chairman Jaczko attended several bilateral meetings conducted by Energy Secretary Steven Chu which will be reported septel. Chairman Jaczko was accompanied by R. W. Borchardt, Executive Director for Operations; Margaret M. Doane, Director, Office of International Programs; Angela Coggins, Policy Director, Office of the Chairman; Scott Moore, Deputy Director, Office of International Programs; and Jennifer Schwartzman and Elizabeth Smirolto, Office of International Programs. Heather Astwood, the Nuclear Safety Attache at the U.S. Mission in Vienna, also provided support to the delegation. Chairman Jaczko, Bill Borchardt and Margaret Doane participated in a roundtable discussion with senior-level U.S. government and industry representatives, organized by the Department of Commerce on September 14.

12. (U) During his bilateral meetings, Chairman Jaczko consistently emphasized the importance of a strong senior regulatory presence at the General Conference, integrated into the activities of the conference itself in close coordination with other government agencies. He also noted radioactive source safety and security is a particularly important issue to him. In addition, he stressed that close attention must be paid to the existing fleet of operating reactors worldwide even as much of the global focus turns toward new reactor designs and new nuclear power programs.

(U) Part 1 septel covers bilateral meetings with senior IAEA officials and DG-designate Amano, the Senior Regulators meeting and side-meetings at the IAEA General Conference. This message, Part 2, covers bilateral meetings with the following countries: France, Canada, Sweden, China, Spain, India, Pakistan, Japan, Argentina, Hungary, Netherlands, Brazil, Slovenia, Kazakhstan, Romania, and Greece. END SUMMARY.

FRANCE

13. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Mr. Andre-Claude Lacoste, President of the French Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN). Lacoste began by noting the successful Multinational Design Evaluation Program (MDEP) workshop held in Paris just prior to the IAEA General

Conference. He then highlighted the many examples of NRC-ASN cooperation throughout the years. Both sides agreed that the high degree of cooperation should be maintained. Further, Lacoste expressed interest in having an informal twice-yearly meeting on technical topics between himself and the Chairman. He noted that France receives many requests for assistance from emerging nuclear countries, but that determining which countries are truly serious has been difficult. Chairman Jaczko responded that some at the IAEA have a clearer understanding of which countries are most likely to start nuclear programs, and agreed that there is a limit to what countries like France and the U.S. can do to help. He asked Lacoste about the European Commission's (EC) involvement, and if emerging countries go through that entity for nuclear assistance. Lacoste explained that the EC formerly focused its resources on assisting countries in Eastern Europe; but now, since most of those nations have joined the European Union, political issues have focused EC resources on other countries often located outside of Europe, such as Egypt and Jordan.

¶4. (SBU) Mr. Lacoste expressed his frustration with the imbalance in emphasis on promotion of nuclear energy vs. nuclear safety, including within the IAEA. Chairman Jaczko agreed that this is an important issue. He suggested moving the Senior Regulators meeting to earlier in the IAEA General Conference as a way of highlighting regulatory aspects. The Chairman continued by inquiring how Lacoste thinks safety can be emphasized in Vienna, in light of IAEA's focus not only on new entrants, but also on non-proliferation. Lacoste shared the Chairman's view and expressed an interest in joining forces in order to bring emphasis to the Agency's safety roles. He suggested one way to do so would be to look at quality and consistency and emphasize safety in IAEA documents. Regarding radioactive sources, Lacoste stated that there is a need to learn which organizations within cooperating countries are responsible for source security since there is currently widespread uncertainty on this matter, and to understand how these countries are carrying out their responsibilities.

¶5. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko asked about the status of France's Generation IV reactor endeavours. Lacoste responded that although regulators should establish regulations for these experimental reactors, it was inherently difficult because, in Mr. Lacoste's words, "we don't even know about the design they're working on," which is incongruous with key objectives of establishing a design's "1) inspectability and 2) maintainability." With respect to fast breeder reactors, France's nuclear safety authority (ASN) is currently trying to collect institutional memory based on France's past experience with these Generation IV designs. Its Phoenix experimental fast breeder reactor was shut down independent of a potential restart on September 12, 2009, due to safety issues pertaining to old welding. Lacoste also mentioned ASN's collaboration with Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) on Generation IV reactors. The Chairman noted that while the U.S. does not have a strong interest in sodium-cooled reactors at the moment, if interest increases in the future the U.S. may need to request information from France on this subject.

CANADA

¶6. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Terry Jamieson, Vice President for Technical Support with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Referring to the two agreements between CNSC and NRC, Chairman Jaczko highlighted the close relationship between the two countries, particularly on radioactive source security. He further acknowledged that the agreement NRC signed with the Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission earlier in the IAEA 2009 General Conference was modelled on a similar agreement between Canada and Brazil. Mr. Jamieson noted that Romania also seeks to cooperate with Canada on the issue of source security.

¶7. (SBU) Regarding the Chalk River National Research Universal Reactor (NRU), which experienced an unplanned shutdown in May 2009 that has resulted in a worldwide shortage of the medical isotope Mo-99, Jamieson explained the safety issues behind the shutdown. Non-destructive testing and other procedures (which required complete defueling to implement) revealed a need to repair welds in the vessel not only at the leak site but 30 feet down. These repairs are scheduled to begin in approximately one month. CNSC wants to ensure that no corners are cut and that the repairs and

welds applied are up to American Society Mechanical Engineers (ASME) codes; moreover, they want to determine the root cause of the event and gain lessons learned. Repair protocols have been signed by all relevant agencies, and commission-level approval will be needed for formal disposition of the repair. The reactor can only be refueled and restarted after all repairs are made and proper approvals are obtained. Jamieson stated that the restart is expected during the first quarter of 2010. Chairman Jaczko noted that there is pressure for a new alternative to producing these materials in light of the situation, but stated that it is important to work "the right way" to get the safety issue resolved, and only then follow with an alternative.

18. (SBU) NRC EDO William Borchardt inquired about the spotlight on regulatory independence. Mr. Jamieson said that while it is important, "we can't be isolated from government. We're trying to communicate expectations, but not be influenced by the government of the day." Chairman Jaczko noted that the NRC functions a bit differently from CNSC in this regard, but is subject to oversight from the U.S. Congress. Borchardt also asked if the Canadians had any advice on hosting an Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) meeting based on their recent experience. The Canadians responded that they created a 350 page book containing processes, technical details, reporting information, etc., which proved invaluable. Significant preparatory work, a series of introductory talks, and formal efforts to stay on track also helped.

SWEDEN

19. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Ann-Louise Eksborg, Director General of the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority (SRSA). She was accompanied by Leif Moberg, Director of SRSA's Department of International Affairs. Eksborg noted SRSA's increased role within the EU under Sweden's EU Presidency. She stated that the SRSA, which was formed through a merger of two existing regulatory bodies, is continuing to grow and adapt to being a new, merged agency. She noted that an influx of new staff, which did not have experience at either previous agency, has helped foster a new culture and a holistic approach to regulation that has helped the merger go more smoothly than expected. In the area of waste management and disposal, Ms. Eksborg noted that a repository site has been chosen by Swedish industry and the SRSA expects an application by next year. She noted that the repository would be for domestic waste only. Chairman Jaczko inquired as to whether the U.S. Administration's policy change on Yucca Mountain could impact progress on a Swedish repository. Eksborg indicated that she did not believe this would be the case because the general public does not follow the Yucca Mountain issue the way the nuclear industry does. She noted that other factors could change the public's mind, including a nuclear-related accident elsewhere in the world, but for now public acceptance was high. She also indicated that there is still a legal ban on the construction of new reactors in Sweden but that the current government has agreed to lift it, provided that no more than ten reactors are operating in Sweden at any given time. The Swedish government is working to conclude legislation to this effect before the 2010 election, when a strong opposition that does not support nuclear power could inhibit its passage. Eksborg noted that although SRSA is technically prepared to review new designs, it cannot build up the staff to do so until the legislation is passed.

CHINA

110. (SBU) OIP Director Margaret Doane and EDO Director William Borchardt met with Mr. Jiang Wei, Deputy Director General for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation, of the Chinese National Nuclear Safety Administration. The discussion focused on the upcoming Organizational Meeting for the Fifth Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, for which China is seeking the Presidency (with candidacy of Vice Minister Li Ganjie) and the United States is seeking a Vice President position (for Bill Borchardt). Jiang explained that China may face a problem because the Review Meeting is two weeks in length and Vice Minister Li would need Party approval to be out of the country for a meeting of that duration, which cannot be granted until closer to the meeting itself in the spring of 2011. The IAEA Secretariat had explained to the NRC delegation that the elections held at the Organizational Meeting are intended to elect particular individuals, not countries in general, such that if Vice Minister Li was elected and unable to

serve his term as President of the Fifth Review Meeting, the title would pass to Borchardt as Vice President, not to another Chinese representative. It was agreed that China would move forward with pursuing the Presidency and determine if Party approval would pose a concern later on. In addition, the U.S. decided to nominate the Chinese candidate for the Presidency.

SPAIN

¶11. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Carmen Martinez-Ten, President of the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council (Consejo de Seguridad Nuclear, CSN). Martinez-Ten began by highlighting past cooperation between NRC and CSN, and expressed her appreciation that NRC had accepted a Spanish assignee to work in NRC's Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, noting that security is very important to Spain. She also thanked the agency for accepting an upcoming assignee who will be involved in spent fuel and high level waste management. Martinez-Ten then proceeded to describe a Spanish project that has been proposed for a high-level waste repository, but noted that politically, it might not be possible. Chairman Jaczko responded that NRC was happy to provide information based on its own experience with waste repositories.

¶12. (SBU) Ms. Martinez-Ten noted that CSN had conducted a study on the safety culture of its Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). She said that while it was difficult to put forward, CSN had prepared the conceptual documents and recently sent them to its licensees for comment. Chairman Jaczko responded that he would be interested in hearing more about CSN's findings, noting that safety culture is already reflected in NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, as inspection findings have shown. Martinez-Ten turned to the subject of transparency and public information, noting that in Spain, there has been strong opposition to nuclear energy. In its efforts to inform the public, Ms. Martinez-Ten noted that her agency recently released a legal instrument for public comment, and used examples from NRC to develop an appropriate strategy to explain the information to the public. This strategy has proven successful. Now CSN seeks to reach out to schools and universities. Martinez-Ten concluded that CSN "can learn a lot from NRC's experience." Chairman Jaczko responded that the more NRC can help other countries, the better; and that more information on this issue can always be provided. Ms. Martinez-Ten said it would certainly be helpful, especially in reaching out to parties (such as vendors) who are not easily convinced.

¶13. (SBU) The discussion also covered other aspects of cooperation. Ms. Martinez-Ten described CSN's cooperative efforts with other Latin American nations, as well as its work with several North African countries on issues such as transport. Regarding cooperation on radioactive sources, she mentioned that the International Nuclear Regulators Association (INRA) was interested in increasing dialogue on this issue. She noted that this was a good time for reflection, and agreed with Chairman Jaczko's assertion that it was important to take steps to improve the role of regulators in the IAEA General Conference.

INDIA

¶14. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with S. K. Sharma, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Review Board of India. DCM accompanied the Chairman to the meeting. Mr. Sharma provided an overview of India's current nuclear activities. There are 17 operating power reactors in India and six under construction, two of which are VVER-1000s. For these, India has worked closely with Russia to exchange information. Sharma indicated that the Russian regulatory body, Rostekhnadzor, would be convening a seminar in the near future to discuss commissioning of VVERs around the world, with a focus on China and Bushehr in Iran. The goal of the meeting would be to discuss current challenges to inform future construction in India and elsewhere. Sharma also indicated that AERB recently received another application to build four additional VVERs, which is currently under review. Among others, there is a prototype fast-breeder reactor under construction. India also continues to work on its indigenous reactor design. There is a site selected for a European Pressurized Reactor (EPR) but AERB has not yet received the application because the industry does not yet own the land. In the existing fleet, the 540 MW pressurized heavy water reactors (CANDU design) were upgraded to 700 MW. Sharma also raised the

issue of digital instrumentation and control, noting that it is an area many countries are addressing. He suggested convening an international forum to share information on this issue. He expressed great appreciation for NRC's accommodation of a regulators' exchange program with AERB and expressed a strong desire to send additional Indian participants. Finally, Sharma invited Chairman Jaczko to visit India.

PAKISTAN

15. (SBU) OIP Director Margaret Doane and EDO Borchardt met with Mohammad Shakilur Rahman, Executive Member of the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA). Rahman noted that Pakistan is moving forward with plans to build Chashma Units 3 and 4, with assistance from China. The design and size (approximately 300 MW each, as China is not willing to go higher) have been established. Both sides agreed that since plant construction will soon take place in Pakistan, this would be a good area for information exchange whereby the U.S. could learn from Pakistan's experience (since the U.S. has not started any new construction yet). Rahman noted that Pakistan has had problems in recent years with energy supply, particularly from hydro and gas, and contended that insufficient energy leads to insufficient industry and unemployment, which in turn contribute to extremism. He expressed his interest in continued, increased cooperation with NRC, and was pleased to learn that video conferencing may be used as a tool toward this end. The U.S. side provided a brief overview of the technical topics NRC is currently addressing, including submerged piping and power reactor transformer failure issues.

16. (SBU) Referring to a recent article in Nucleonics Week, the Pakistani side noted its concern that China has only recently started using American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) standards. Pakistan is seeking safety assurances in light of this, specifically on equipment including the reactor vessel supplied by China in the past. Regarding source controls, the Pakistanis have a mature program which follows IAEA's classification scheme. Category I requirements are especially stringent and became a concern in recent years because sources are not housed in robust structures, but in public facilities, such as hospitals. For this reason PNRA has required enhanced control over sources. Facilities such as hospitals use cameras throughout the buildings, and place sources so that they will be difficult for unauthorized individuals to easily tamper with or remove. There was one lost source, but it was reported according to required procedures. With regard to export/import controls, the PNRA will not provide an import license for radioactive sources unless the supplier agrees to take it back after its useful life.

JAPAN

17. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with representatives from the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA), including Koichiro Nakamura, Deputy Director General for Safety Examination; Kentaro Morita, Director, International Affairs Office; and Aya Ishimi, Assistant Director, International Affairs Office. In addition, representatives from the Nuclear Safety Division of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Science, and Technology participated, including Dr. Itaru Watanabe, Senior Deputy Director General, Science and Technology Policy Bureau; Dr. Kenya Suyama, Director, Office of International Relations, Science and Technology Policy Bureau; and Masaru Shigeyama, Inspector/Coordinator for Inspectors, Safeguards Office. At the start of the meeting, both sides agreed that having an updated NISA-NRC arrangement in place was essential to ensuring continued, adequate cooperation (the NISA-NRC Arrangement lapsed in 2007). Nakamura then mentioned recent fruitful cooperation between NRC and NISA on digital instrumentation and controls (I and C). Chairman Jaczko recalled a previous reactor site visit in Japan where he personally witnessed Japan's highly advanced digital I and C systems, noting that there is much that the U.S. can learn from Japan's experience in this area. The Chairman then inquired about the status of the Monju fast breeder reactor prototype. Nakamura responded that he understands it will be restarted before March 2010, noting that NISA reviews safety for Monju, including seismic safety. Chairman Jaczko expressed his thanks to NISA for briefings provided to NRC on seismic issues.

18. (SBU) Moving on to the topic of new reactors, the Chairman noted

that NRC is moving forward with new applications, and that NRC's cooperation with Japan through MDEP has worked well. Nakamura noted that the Japanese have been working on new guidance documentation. As part of its research, NISA recently sent NRC some questionnaires on low quantity and naturally occurring radioactive materials, but had not yet heard back from NRC. The Chairman responded with information about the complexities of the NRC's guidance regarding these materials in light of jurisdictional and legal issues, and said that the staff would follow up. NISA is also conducting safety assessment reviews for new reactor designs, covering such areas as accidents and stakeholder communication. The Chairman cited his participation in a Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) conference in Japan on Openness and Communication, highlighting the influence of local communities. The Japanese side also pointed to human resources as a good area for information exchange, and welcomed information exchange with the NRC on the ABWR design. Chairman Jaczko agreed that this information was very important, thereby underscoring the need to complete the NISA-NRC arrangement. Nakamura concluded by noting that although a new Prime Minister had just been sworn into office in Japan, that NISA's nuclear safety emphasis would not change.

ARGENTINA

119. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Dr. Raul Racana, Chairman of the Argentine Nuclear Regulatory Authority (ARN). He was accompanied by Gabriel Terigi, Head of the Nuclear Affairs and Institutional Communication Department; Sonia Fernandez Moreno of the same department, and Pablo Zunino Head of the Nuclear Affairs Division. Dr. Racana indicated that plans were moving forward to complete and start up Atucha II, the Siemens pressurized heavy water reactor on which construction began nearly 30 years ago but was halted due to funding shortages. He also requested additional cooperation with NRC in the area of life extension for Argentina's two operating reactors. In addition, Racana discussed security issues, explaining that security is under ARN's jurisdiction and is a high priority, particularly in the radioactive source area. He emphasized his belief that safety and security must be integrated so that one does not adversely affect the other. In particular, he discussed a drill conducted in Argentina simulating the theft of a radioactive source. The ARN and Argentine police worked together, and Dr. Racana noted that each brought expertise to the exercise that the other does not possess. He stated that not all countries share the view that a safety/security interface is important, but that he had written a paper for the World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS) in support of it.

HUNGARY

120. (SBU) On September 16, Chairman Jaczko met with Jozsef Ronaky, Chairman of the Hungarian Atomic Energy Agency (HAEA). After congratulating the Chairman on his appointment and providing him with an open invitation to visit Hungary, Dr. Ronaky reviewed the status of HAEA's programs. Recent activities have included major power uprates from approximately 440 MW to 500 MW on all four of its units, along with a decision to extend established plant life of 30 years by 20 more years through a license extension process (Hungarian plant licenses are slated to expire in 2012). Ronaky noted that in moving forward with life extension plans, HAEA has drawn heavily from the NRC's license renewal experience, referring to it as a "key factor" in its progress. Turning to the subject of new reactors, Dr. Ronaky noted that in March 2009 the Parliament almost unanimously approved a decision in principle to construct a nuclear power plant (on the Paks site, where Hungary's four current units are located). He stated Hungary needs to review its law to make it "smoother"; moreover, the HAEA is not prepared for a full design review and seeks cooperation from international counterparts in this area. Referencing the September 2009 Multinational Design Evaluation Program meeting in Paris, Chairman Jaczko noted that discussions took place regarding ways to facilitate information sharing, such as through the creation of an electronic library. The Chairman asserted that such an electronic library should be available to more countries, since "we learn from countries that are reviewing the same designs as us." The Hungarian side pointed out that they would be building a pressurized water reactor of design as yet to be determined, and that they were interested in discussing more specific details pertaining to the AP1000, preferably soon. Chairman Jaczko stated that the NRC would be happy to provide

information in a timely fashion through bilateral channels.

NETHERLANDS

121. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with representatives from the Dutch Nuclear Safety Department (KFD), including Dr. Piet J.W.M. Muskens, Director; and Michel L.H. Deelen, Deputy Head. Dr. Muskens opened by highlighting the good contacts between NRC and KFD, and stated his belief that both countries have a special responsibility for safeguards. When asked by Chairman Jaczko if the Netherlands has made decisions to move forward with plant construction, Dr. Muskens noted that a recent change in political leadership in The Netherlands has not affected the will to build reactors which can be used to produce medical isotopes. He also expressed his view that old reactors need to be replaced. The Netherlands' Petten research reactor (used to produce isotopes) is now in semi-operation, "not unsafe, but not as safe as it could be," according to Dr. Muskens. IAEA will do an assessment by the end of the year, and a decision will be made about needed repairs, and, moreover, whether or not Petten will need to be shut down. Dr. Muskens further contended that if the Nuclear Research and Consultancy Group (NRG) raised adequate funds, it would probably construct a new reactor to produce isotopes. The Chairman noted that in the U.S., several reactor licensees were considering producing medical isotopes; but if such a decision were taken, production would not be feasible for at least one year. He further asserted that despite the shortage of Moly-99, the margins of patient care must be preserved, and expressed his appreciation for KFD's cooperation on this matter. A discussion followed on ongoing technical issues pertaining to low enriched uranium vs. highly enriched uranium targets used in isotope production. Both sides agreed that it is important to maintain channels of communication with regard these and other issues, with Dr. Muskens noting that, "If there are opportunities, we'll knock on your door, and same with you."

122. (SBU) Muskens advised that the power reactor at Borssele could stay open for 20 more years, and that more personnel are being hired. He then inquired about U.S. plans for spent fuel disposal in a final repository vs. interim storage for 100 years until a better solution could be reached. The Chairman responded with information about the Obama administration's decision not to support Yucca Mountain. Muskens also asked about new reactors in the U.S., and Chairman Jaczko provided information on the number of construction and operating license (COL) applications to the NRC currently under review.

BRAZIL

123. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko's first bilateral meeting of the conference took place with delegates from the Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission (Comissao Nacional de Energia Nuclear, CNEN), including Dr. Odair D. Goncalves, President; Marcos Nogueira Martins, Director of Research and Development; Dr. Sc. Maria Helena Marechal, General Coordinator, General Coordination of Industrial and Medical Facilities; and Maria Cristina Lourenco, International Relations Officer. Goncalves and Chairman Jaczko signed both an updated version of the Administrative Agreement between NRC and CNEN, and a Memorandum of Cooperation on the Import and Export of Certain Radioactive Sources. Dr. Goncalves noted that Brazil has made a policy decision to expand its nuclear power program. Along with this decision, the government has plans to enhance safety regulation by restructuring CNEN, which is presently responsible for plant operation and regulation. A new independent Brazilian Nuclear Regulatory Authority separate from CNEN is being planned and will soon be proposed to the legislature. (CNEN would continue to promote nuclear activities in Brazil). U.S. technology, the AP1000, is among the technologies Brazil is considering for its new plants. Chairman Jaczko broached the subject of aging management, noting that Brazil conducts ten year periodic reviews of its reactors while the U.S. set a timeline of 40 years for license renewal purposes. Goncalves noted that the Brazilians are more seriously considering this issue; in particular, now that a new regulatory body is envisioned, they may take the opportunity to review the "whole system."

SLOVENIA

124. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with delegates from the Slovenian

Nuclear Safety Administration including Dr. Andrej Stritar, Director; Ales Skraban, Head of General Affairs; and Igor Grlicarev, Head of International Cooperation. Asked about the future of the Slovenian nuclear program, Stritar responded that while Slovenia's previous administration proposed construction of a second reactor unit, there was little political support. The current government is not against nuclear power, but is not taking any decisions to move forward with expansion, either. Conversely, the government decided to build a thermal, coal-fired unit in a part of the country rich in coal. Regarding the concept of global certification (which the Slovenians favor), the Chairman pointed out that while it would be difficult for the U.S. to change to such a process, a global certification approach could be appropriate for radioactive sources.

Dr. Stritar, who also serves as President for the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG), noted that there are analogous cooperative efforts in Europe, e.g. for transportation of radioactive materials, and that harmonization of radioactive waste regulations may be next. Nonetheless, Stritar stated that industry should lead efforts toward this goal. Stritar then discussed problems with difficult-to-detect radioactive scrap metal imported

into Slovenia that, once processed along with non-radioactive scrap, presents a difficult and expensive remediation problem. Since there are no international treaties controlling the movement of scrap metal, and exporting countries cannot be forced to take back radioactive sources, Slovenian law now requires domestic companies to provide the physical dimensions of scrap metal in order to obtain a license to import it into the country. Chairman Jaczko compared the situation of "homeless" radioactive material finding its way into scrap metal to the orphan source problem in the U.S., and referred to the IAEA Code of Conduct on Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources as a good framework toward a solution to the problem. Dr. Stritar noted that U.S.-supplied portal monitors have been very helpful in the effort to curtail this problem. The discussion then turned to radioactive waste disposal, with Dr. Stritar asking the Chairman about the situation with the Yucca Mountain repository. Chairman Jaczko explained his understanding of the Obama administration's position not to move forward with the repository, but noted that the fuel is being stored safely in the meantime, and that the U.S. can use the situation as an opportunity to find a better solution.

KAZAKHSTAN

125. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Asset Magauov, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR). He was accompanied by Timur Zhantikin, Chairman of the Kazakh Atomic Energy Commission, which falls under the MEMR, and members of his staff. Vice Minister Magauov thanked the NRC for its assistance in developing Kazakhstan's nuclear regulations and requested continued support, noting that Kazakhstan plans to build nuclear power plants.

The Kazakhs have a target of 2020 for commissioning their first nuclear power plant; at this time, however, the government has not officially approved this plan. The Vice Minister indicated that his government has had lengthy discussions with Russia about Russian reactor designs but also intends to research other designs. Kazakhstan is also involved in research reactor projects and has recently repatriated the final load of HEU from its reactor in Almaty; it is fully converted to LEU. Following the bilateral discussion, Chairman Jaczko and Vice Minister Magauov renewed the NRC-MEMR[KAEC] Arrangement for Cooperation. The Kazakh mission noted to NRC's delegation that the Vice Minister had travelled to Vienna specifically to sign this Arrangement.

ROMANIA

126. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko met with Borbala Vajda, President of the Romanian National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control (CNCAN).

She was accompanied by Lucian Biro, Director General for Regulation, Licensing and Control of Nuclear Activities; Mihaela Ion, Director of the International Affairs Division; Viorel Radu, Director of the Ionizing Radiation Division; and Soren Repanovici of her staff. Vajda indicated that Romania had recently completed repatriation of spent fuel from its research reactor to Russia. Chairman Jaczko congratulated her on this achievement. Vajda thanked NRC for hosting several CNCAN staff in its foreign assignee program. She noted that the Romanian government wishes to re-launch the country's nuclear program, which presents a great challenge for

CNCAN. She noted the difficulty in recruiting and retaining competent staff in the regulatory body and indicated that CNCAN had asked the Romanian government to provide incentives to retain staff. At present, there are several projects under CNCAN's supervision, including reconstruction on Cernavoda Units 3 and 4 and the construction of a low- and intermediate-level waste repository.

¶27. (SBU) Chairman Jaczko inquired about Romania's plans for high-level waste. Ms. Vajda indicated that currently there is sufficient onsite storage at Cernavoda, but that in the next fifty years there may be greater consideration of a geological repository. She noted the difficulty in finding a potential location for such a repository, as Romania is a small country. In the new reactor area, Vajda noted that the next new nuclear plant in Romania (after completion of the CANDUs at Cernavoda) would be a pressurized water reactor (PWR) and expressed hope that NRC-CNCAN cooperation could increase to share NRC approaches on regulating PWRs. Biro also noted that it was CNCAN's "dream" to build an emergency operations center in Romania modelled after NRC's, that would serve as a center of excellence for safety, security and radiation protection. Chairman Jaczko expressed NRC's willingness to cooperate closely with CNCAN on PWR issues and noted that the NRC's licensing process has changed since CNCAN had adopted parts of it. He stated that NRC would provide CNCAN with information on current licensing procedures because they may be more comprehensive and useful. He also noted NRC's interest in Romania's experience in nuclear power plant construction, noting that the U.S. has not had a plant under construction in many years. Ms. Vajda invited Chairman Jaczko to visit Romania.

GREECE

¶28. (SBU) OIP Director Margaret Doane and EDO Director William Borchardt met with representatives of the Greek Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC), including Dr. Christos Housiadas, President; Dr. Vassiliki Kamenopoulou, Head of Licensing and Inspections Division; and Theodoros Matikas, Member of Board. Dr. Housiadas opened by stating that the GAEC Annual Report will be released soon. Further, he referenced the NRC-GAEC agreement that was extended last year, and stated that there is a special development for which GAEC may turn to the U.S. for assistance. The Greek National Research Center operates a 5 MW research reactor (which was constructed decades ago by the U.S. firm General Atomic and licensed by the GAEC). Now its management wants to embark on a major refurbishment program, for which licensing will be necessary. The GAEC would welcome input, exchanges of ideas, and cooperation from the U.S. Borchardt noted that the NRC has been revising its licensing process for research and test reactors. In addition, NRC has a small staff dedicated to this area. The GAEC reps were very interested to hear that an NRC Standard Review Plan is available, and that, according to Borchardt, license renewal for a research reactor was much like obtaining a brand new license (thus addressing concerns on the part of GAEC that this undertaking would involve a major refurbishment and might not qualify for a simple renewal). Housiadas inquired if this effort could be undertaken through both the U.S. and the IAEA. Mrs. Doane explained how international requests for engagement are usually brought to the NRC, noting that IAEA may or may not be involved. When Mrs. Doane inquired as to GAEC's timeframe, Housiadas responded that they plan to begin the process by October 1, 2009, when the preliminary documents on dismantlement (not yet on licensing) will arrive. Borchardt suggested that the two sides start a dialogue on the matter by videoconference. Housiadas also noted that Greek operators have been requesting codes such as RELAP 5. Borchardt provided further information on engaging with the NRC Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research in order to obtain them, emphasizing that any requests should come from the regulator.

DAVIES